



PREVENTION OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE BIG SKY

[NOTE: *Montana Public Health* has been published monthly, including Added Issues in some months, since September 2006. The current issue is the 100th for this publication.]

Born in Montana: Birth Facts Quiz

Vital Statistics are a fundamental source of public health and epidemiologic data. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has maintained vital records for Montana since 1907. These data help identify and quantify health burdens experienced by Montanans and predecessor state agencies and help track progress in improving health. The following 12 questions highlight infant health concerns in Montana, and are based on information from birth certificates for babies of Montana-resident mothers who gave birth in the five-year interval 2008-2012.¹

1. Approximately how many babies are born to Montana mothers each year?
 - a. 5,000
 - b. 12,000
 - c. 16,000
2. About what proportion of new mothers entered prenatal care in the first trimester?
 - a. 70%
 - b. 35%
 - c. 50%
3. Approximately what proportion of new mothers reported consuming alcohol during their pregnancy?
 - a. 25%
 - b. 20%
 - c. 1%
4. Approximately what proportion of new mothers smoked during some part of their pregnancy?
 - a. 5%
 - b. 16%
 - c. 40%
5. Approximately what was the rate of prematurity (< 37 weeks gestation) among newborns?
 - a. 10% of live births
 - b. 15% of live births
 - c. 20% of live births
6. Approximately what was the rate of low birth weight (<2500 grams or 5.5 pounds) among newborns?
 - a. 7% of live births
 - b. 9% of live births
 - c. 11% of live births
7. What was the rate of neonatal mortality (< 28 days after birth)?
 - a. 2.3 per 1,000 live births
 - b. 3.6 per 1,000 live births
 - c. 12.0 per 1,000 live births
8. What was the most common cause of neonatal mortality?
 - a. congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities
 - b. sudden infant death syndrome
 - c. disorders related to short gestation and low birth weight
9. What was the rate of post-neonatal infant mortality (29-364 days)?
 - a. 2.4 per 1,000 live births
 - b. 3.6 per 1,000 live births
 - c. 12.0 per 1,000 live births
10. What was the most common cause of post-neonatal infant mortality?
 - a. congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities
 - b. sudden infant death syndrome
 - c. disorders related to short gestation and low birth weight
11. What was the most popular boy's name?
 - a. Michael
 - b. Samuel
 - c. Wyatt
12. What was the most popular girl's name?
 - a. Emma
 - b. Emily
 - c. Ashley

Answers 1: b., 2: a, 3: c, 4: b, 5: a, 6: a, 7: b, 8: a, 9: a, 10: b, 11: c, 12: a.

Recommendations

Montana's rates of prematurity, low birth weight, and neonatal mortality are slightly lower than the Healthy People 2020 (HP 2020)² targets, and our post-neonatal mortality is only slightly higher than the HP 2020 target. Nevertheless, these rates can be improved.

- Nearly one third of Montana mothers enter prenatal care later than the first trimester. Early and frequent prenatal care is essential to reduce low birth weight, prematurity, and many complications of pregnancy that may threaten mother or infant.
- 16% of Montana mothers reported smoking during pregnancy, increasing the risk for prematurity, low birth weight, and infant mortality, especially from SIDS. Pregnant women who smoke and those planning to become pregnant should be referred to the Montana Quit Line at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/mtupp/quitlinefactsheet.shtml>
- Some causes of neonatal mortality are preventable. For example, adequate folic acid intake before conception and in early pregnancy reduces the risk of neural tube defects.³ This underscores the importance of pre-conceptual planning and health care.⁴
- Many post-neonatal deaths are potentially preventable, especially those from SIDS and unintentional injuries. All new parents should receive education about SIDS prevention, especially promoting safe sleep practices, breastfeeding, and full immunization; and eliminating exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke.⁵

For more information about Vital Statistics in Montana, contact Bruce Schwartz, MA, MPA, Lead Vital Statistics Epidemiologist, at bschwartz@mt.gov or 406-444-1756

References:

¹ These statistics were compiled from Montana Vital Statistics Annual Reports, 2008-2012.

² <http://www.healthypeople.gov>

³ <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/index.html>

⁴ <http://www.marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/get-ready-for-pregnancy.aspx>

⁵ <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2011/10/12/peds.2011-2284>

2,110 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.43 per copy, for a total cost of \$1434.48, which includes \$463.88 for printing and \$970.60 for distribution.